

EXHIBIT 4 H04
DATE 1-30-09
HB 281

January 27, 2009

RE: HB 281
House Human Services Committee

Dear Madam Chair and members of the committee,

I am a member of the Missoula Adolescent Pregnancy, Parenting and Prevention Services, MAPPPS. MAPPPS is a coalition of organizations whose mission is to develop a community strategy for the prevention of teen pregnancy and to address the needs of pregnant and parenting teens. I live in Missoula and unfortunately was unable to travel to Helena to deliver this testimony personally.

I strongly urge the passage of **HB 281** to cover contraception under CHIP. According to the National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy, Montana spent \$18 million dollars in 2004 on teen pregnancies. In most circumstances a teen parent will need assistance for medical bills, rent and utilities, food, and child care. Most find it difficult to graduate high school and if they do graduate are unlikely to move onto higher education.

In 2004 Montana Public Health and Human Services reported two in ten girls will become pregnant by age nineteen; that number is even higher in the Native American community being five in ten teen girls will become pregnant by age nineteen. Montana had the second highest percentage of growth of teen pregnancy in 2006; 13%; these are not the kinds of numbers we want to brag about.

Please pass coverage of contraception under CHIP to provide a better option than pregnancy for the young women of our state.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Angelique Nordquist
MAPPPS Coalition Member
415 N. Higgins, Suite 102
Missoula, MT

January 28, 2009
House Human Services Committee
House Bill 281

Dear Human Services Committee, Chair Arlene Becker, and fellow committee members:

I am writing in regard to request that birth control be covered under CHIP. I regret that I could not be present to testify; however, I reside in Billings and was unable to make the trip to Helena.

As a mother of a 14 year old daughter that has had CHIP insurance, I believe strongly that birth control should be covered under this program. In the future should my daughter decide to become sexually active, she would need access to birth control. The cost of this contraception would be out of reach for us as we are a family of 5 living on poverty wages. A conservative estimate of pills costing twenty eight dollars a month starting at age 15 through the age of 19 would run several hundred dollars each year. The cost of a teen pregnancy resulting in the inability to afford quality contraception would be devastating to not only my daughter, but to our entire family as well. The financial and emotional burden caused by an unwanted and completely preventable pregnancy would be astronomical and profound and could create costly lifelong effects.

Prevention is key and I implore you to vote in favor of families of young women who are struggling in this tough economic climate to make sure that their teens do not face the terror of an unwanted pregnancy. I thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Stacey M. Faldetta
Billings, MT